

Today, Congressman Pete Stark (D-CA) joined with several of his colleagues in a letter warning other Members of Congress that the U.S. industry will attempt to sugar-coat failed North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) policies and re-sell them to the American people. Anticipating a request from President Bush for fast track negotiating authority, Stark and his colleagues believe there is a need to educate new House Members, and remind veterans, of the mistakes made under NAFTA.

“Members of Congress knew that the promises made relating to labor and the environment under NAFTA merely provided political cover, in order for the agreement to pass,” expressed Rep. Stark. The letter highlights some of the ways in which NAFTA negotiators were able to rhetorically sound pro-labor and pro-environment, but legally provided no protections for these, or other consumer interest issues.

“We’ve had six years of NAFTA to learn from our mistakes— and not repeat them,” warned Stark. “It’s not enough to merely agree to including labor, environment and consumer interests in trade agreements. Clearly, there’s a right way to do it, and a wrong way to do it. I want to make certain that my colleagues know the right way,” concluded Stark.